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REMARKS

BY

PROFESSOR BACHE.



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Prof. Bache stated that he had been instructed to make an announcement which, though it did not belong immediately to the inauguration of the Dudley Observatory, was, nevertheless, intimately connected with the progress of Astronomical science in the United States.

It was known to many whom he addressed, that the gentleman who had just closed the lucid and terse account of the organization and arrangements of the Dudley Observatory, had not many years ago returned from Europe, where he had been to study under Gauss, and Schumacher, and Encke, those methods of analysis and observation which they had done so much to perfect, full of the desire to rival the institutions of the old world by creations in the new. He found observatories established here, and supplied with instruments, and in part with observers, and

with the means of publishing from time to time their observations. But no vehicle for the current higher astronomical science of the day, no journal upon the plan of that established by the lamented Schumacher, existed in the country. The importance of such a means of disseminating the results of astronomical research, could not be overrated, but its establishment must necessarily be up-hill work. Its circulation must be limited to the number of those engaged in practical astronomy, as it could not by popularizing the science appeal to amateurs or to general readers. Such a journal would, therefore, unless supported by public funds, be a source of pecuniary loss to its editor or publisher, his loss being the gain to the Astronomer. Such a contribution to Astronomical science Dr. Gould desired to make. Though enjoying none of the emoluments of official position, he determined, after counsel with a few friends in the American Association for the advancement of science, and an expression of opinion by the section of Physics, Mathematics and Astronomy, to commence the work. Thus was established the Astronomical Journal, published at Cambridge. The high scientific ability of the editor, and the judicious and

careful character of his supervision won for the journal the applause of the highest authorities in the United States and in Europe, and the good will of numerous contributors. The patronage of the journal was even smaller than could reasonably have been anticipated, no observatory or institution as such contributing more than merely by subscriptions to a very limited number of copies of the journal to its support. It is due to the friends of Dr. Gould to say, that they did contribute, as far as he would permit them, to alleviate the pecuniary burthen thus thrown upon him, but the independence of the editor always rebelled against offers of aid, and he preferred from his own moderate means to make the sacrifice required to sustain the publication. His editorial labor should not have been rendered gratuitously, but even this contribution did not suffice; he was called upon to labor in other fields, and to devote what was thus acquired to the progress of astronomy in his country; an example of devotion to science which well merits that it should be dragged publicly from its concealment and brought to light before those assembled this day. This sacrifice is now to cease, a fact which will surprise no one more than the editor himself.

The spirit which has done so much in this city for astronomical science, has prompted twelve gentlemen of Albany to contribute the sum necessary to support the Astronomical Journal for six years, and that journal will be hereafter published in connection with the Dudley Observatory of Albany.